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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, Nov. 2, 1932

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Kitchen Knives." Information approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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"Fish chowder?" an old sea captain once said to me. "Yes'm. I've made many a meal on fish chowder. Have these sixty years, ever since I was a boy. My grandfather lived to be a hundred and five and he claimed right up to his dying day that it was fish chowder that kept him alive and kicking."

The specialists in foods and nutrition don't make any claims about the connection between ripe old age and fish chowder, but they do hold with the old captain that fish chowder is an excellent food and that it is almost a meal in itself. The chowder contains not only the fish, but also vegetables and milk--certainly a meal all in one dish. In fact, if you have fish chowder for a family dinner, all you need to go with it are some crackers or thin toast to add crispness to the meal, some cabbage slaw to add a fresh vegetable and flavor, and, for dessert, some lemon tarts.

There. I've told you the menu planned for Wednesday. Maybe I'd better go over it again, in case you didn't jot it down. And then I'll be ready to give you that fine inexpensive recipe for fish chowder. The menu: Fish chowder; Crisp toast or crackers; Cabbage slaw; and Lemon tarts.

Now for the fish chowder. Ten ingredients.

1 and 1/2 pounds of fresh cod, haddock or any other large fish	
2 cups of diced potatoes	1 onion, chopped
1 cup of diced carrots	2 tablespoons of flour
1 quart of water	1 pint of milk
1/4 pound of salt pork, diced	Salt, and pepper

Did you get all those? Better check while I repeat them. (Repeat.)

Cut the fish into small pieces and remove the bones and skin. Cook the fish, the potatoes and the carrots in water for 15 minutes. Fry the salt pork until crisp. Then remove it from the fat. Now cook the onion in the fat for a few minutes. Add the flour, stir until well blended, and add the milk. Add this mixture to the fish and vegetables. Then add the salt and pepper and stir frequently while the mixture simmers for 10 minutes longer. Add more seasoning if necessary and serve over crackers or crisp thin slices of toast.

The other day I dropped in to see a friend of mine who was making apple sauce. And what do you think she was doing? Peeling apples with her great big bread knife!

"Gracious," I said, "that looks as uncomfortable as trying to slice bread with a little paring knife."



"It's worse," she said. "But I've mislaid my paring knife in that huge drawer there and I've got to get my apples on to cook. I find I'm taking off half the apple along with the peeling. I can't help it with this clumsy knife."

The specialists are right, I believe. They say a wise cook chooses the knife that suits her job and they suggest that every housewife who wants to do her job well and save time and labor ought to take an inventory of her kitchen utensils every now and then, especially her knives. You can scarcely prepare a meal without a knife. Yet this most-used article is often the poorest tool in the kitchen.

What knives does a good cook need? A butcher knife, a bread knife, three paring knives, a wide spatula and a narrow one, and kitchen scissors. If she wants to save herself time and work, she'll keep all these right in handy reach of the kitchen table. And she'll keep them all good and sharp--except the spatulas, of course.

Many housekeepers still keep their knives rattling around in a kitchen drawer with a lot of other kitchen utensils. But long ago the specialists converted me to using a handy little knife rack, up on the kitchen wall. With a rack like that you don't have to search for the right knife. It's there before your eyes and within your reach. And a rack keeps knives sharper, too. Their edges are so likely to get dulled, rattling around in a drawer and knocking against everything.

Suppose you go shopping for kitchen knives? How do you know a good knife when you see one?

A good knife has a handle of the right size and shape to be comfortable in your hand--large enough so it doesn't cramp your hand and small enough so you can get a good grip on it. Also, a good knife has proper balance between the blade and the handle. This not only gives more comfort in using, but it also gives a quicker, more even cutting stroke. The third point about a good knife is that the blade is made of a good grade of steel. Good steel has a better edge and stays sharper than cheap steel. We lucky housewives today don't have to spend hours scouring our kitchen knives as our grandmothers did, for we can own stainless steel knives that neither rust nor tarnish.

You'll find many knife sharpeners on the market now. Be sure to buy one that isn't too rough, that can't hurt the edge of your knife. Some of them just chip the cutting edge of the knife, though they do make it temporarily sharper. That's the reason many people think that for a good quality steel, the old-fashioned whetstone is still the best and safest sharpener.

Perhaps tomorrow we can continue this conversation. Also tomorrow, I'll have some news for you from the Food and Drug specialists about buying medicines.

